

marks, he referred to Grant Colfax, Director, Office of National AIDS Policy, who introduced the President; Mark Dybul, executive director, Global Fund To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; Michel Sidibé, Executive Director, UNAIDS; William H. Gates III, cochair and trustee,

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; former President George W. Bush; and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond M. Tutu of Cape Town, South Africa. He also referred to Executive Order 13649; and S. 1545, which was approved December 2 and assigned Public Law No. 113-56.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia

December 3, 2013

President Obama. Well, it's wonderful to welcome President Santos back to the White House. This is not his first visit, but it is the first time that I'm able to return the favor for the extraordinary hospitality that he and the Colombian people and his family showed me when I had a chance to travel there for the very successful Summit of the Americas.

We have had an excellent conversation, I think, reflecting on the deepening of what have already been very strong bilateral ties between our two countries. Not only do we continue to excel in security cooperation that has, I think, helped to facilitate the tremendous progress that's taken place in Colombia over the last decade, but precisely because of the success on the security front, we've also been able to widen our discussion to a wide—to a whole host of issues: how we can improve education and economic opportunity in Colombia, how we can work together on energy projects that are vital to the region, how we can take advantage of new technologies to expand the ability for a rural child to be exposed to the world, and how we can work in partnership together on many of the key regional challenges that take place.

We also had an opportunity to talk about the success so far of the free trade agreement and its implementation. There's still some details that are being worked on. Nevertheless, what we've seen is a 20-percent increase in trade between our two countries since its signing. That creates jobs in Colombia; it creates jobs here in the United States of America.

I congratulated President Santos on his bold and brave efforts to bring about a lasting and just peace inside of Colombia in his negotia-

tions with the FARC. Obviously, this has been a longstanding conflict within Colombia. It is not easy; there are many challenges ahead. But the fact that he has taken this step, I think, is the right one because it sends a signal to the people of Colombia that it is possible to unleash the enormous potential if we can move beyond this conflict. But obviously, there are going to be some very challenging questions moving forward. I'm pleased to see the President's strong commitment on that front. The United States is supportive of those efforts.

And finally, I think what we've increasingly seen is Colombia's influence on the world stage. We supported Colombia's membership in the OECD because it's reflective of Colombia's rise. It continues to have a strong influence regionally. I emphasized to President Santos that the work and the efforts that he's made on issues like human rights and labor rights inside of Colombia are not only good for the Colombian people—and we want to encourage them—but they also show a path for countries that have had, in some cases, a difficult history moving forward into a 21st century that promises greater opportunity and prosperity and peace. And the influence that President Santos personally, as well as Colombia as a nation, has is only growing. And we think that's a positive because we consider Colombia a great friend and a great success.

Finally, I think it's worth mentioning that both Colombia and the United States have qualified for the World Cup. Obviously, we wish both teams well. I think it's fair to say that we will be rooting for our teams, so we don't know if they'll play each other, but I think it's a

great sign of the excellent sportsmen that we have in our countries, and the World Cup, I think, signifies also the bonds that all people have. So we're very excited to see how that event goes in Brazil, and we congratulate Brazil on hosting the World Cup.

So, Mr. President, welcome. And thank you again for your great hospitality. More importantly, thank you for your friendship and your leadership.

President Santos. Thank you so much, President Obama, for your welcome, and thank you again for this invitation. As you well said, this is not the first time that I've been in the White House, and this time my visit comes under very special circumstances.

The relations of our two countries are—find themselves at their best moment ever. And as a result, the agenda that we have discussed this morning is much broader than it's ever been. We have gone well beyond the usual items that we used to discuss, like security, like drug trafficking, and we are now expanding it to topics like education, energy, and mutual cooperation: what we can do regionally.

And I want to thank you especially, President Obama, for all the support that you have shown us in the process towards peace in Colombia. It's a process that is doing very well, and it is my hope that this is a conflict that will come to an end. We have been shedding blood for over 50 years, and the support of the United States and the entire world is decisive in reaching that peace we all want.

And I was telling President Obama that just as 50 years ago President Kennedy visited Colombia and launched the Alliance for Progress, we should think of something similar that we

could do today, work together to launch a new alliance: an alliance for progress and peace, one that will help the entire region.

Circumstances are very different today, opportunities are different, and the technology we have at our disposal is very different, and therefore, there are many fronts in which we can work together. There are many synergies that we can generate as a result that will lead to positive results.

And we also talked about the cooperation that we have been carrying out together to benefit third countries, in particular, countries of Central America and the Caribbean. We will be tripling the joint operations we're going to be carrying out jointly. For example, just one case, we have 17,000 officers who have been trained in Colombia, officers who come from these countries. And this is the kind of thing we will continue doing together.

And finally, I also want to wish the United States all success in the World Cup. It is my hope, however, that our teams are not going to play—be playing each other very soon. I certainly hope they won't meet in the first round. But we can maybe eliminate the U.S. team later on. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. All right, we'll have to make a wager on that. [*Laughter*] We'll see if that—the actual game comes up. Thank you.

Thank you so much everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:13 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) insurgent group. President Santos spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act December 3, 2013

All right. Thank you, Monica. Well, thanks to Monica, thanks to everybody standing behind me, and thanks for everybody out there who cares deeply about this issue. Monica's story is important, because for all the day-to-day fights here in Washington around the Affordable Care Act, it's stories like hers that

should remind us why we took on this reform in the first place.

And for too long, few things left working families more vulnerable to the anxieties and insecurities of today's economy than a broken health care system. So we took up the fight because we believe that in America, nobody